

**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
POCD WORKSHOP
MEETING #2**

**GROTON PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (POCD) AND
MUNICIPAL COASTAL PROGRAM UPDATES**

JULY 22, 2014 - 6:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – 134 GROTON LONG POINT ROAD, GROTON, CT
COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Sherrard, Pritchard (6:48 pm), Kane, Munn, Steinfeld
Alternate members present: Tarbox, Zed (6:10 pm)
Absent: Fitzgerald
Staff present: Jones, Glemboski, Silsby

Chairman Sherrard appointed Tarbox to sit for Pritchard and Steinfeld to sit as Acting Secretary.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JULY 8, 2014

MOTION: To approve the minutes of July 8, 2014, as written.

Motion made by Steinfeld, seconded by Kane, so voted 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Sherrard).

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. Review of Draft Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) – Conservation Theme and Corresponding Action Agenda

Staff explained what sections will be reviewed tonight and distributed a copy of the Action Agenda, for ease in reviewing the text. She stated that the narrative does not support the Action Agenda recommendations. The narrative should follow the description in the Action Agenda opening paragraph – Goals, Objectives, or Strategies and Recommendations or Actions. At this point in the process, Staff noted that the recommendations in the Action Agenda should be used as an outline to write the text. The Commission agreed that the lay out of the document does not read well and must be revised to reflect the Action Agenda.

Staff stated that Fitzgerald submitted additional comments, which will be brought up during tonight's discussion.

The Commission focused their review on the Action Agenda, noting that the text will need to be significantly revised.

Reviewing of the draft document began on page 35.

- ❖ Change the title “Natural Resources” to “Protect Natural Resources” (pg.35)

- ❖ Page 35-36 - Summarize the recommendations of the DWQMP rather than listing all of them.
- ❖ Be more consistent with the words “conservation” and “protection” (pg.35).
- ❖ Coordination with the Ledge Light Health District is on-going and should not be an Action Agenda item.
- ❖ Change the map title to “Natural Diversity Database Map” (pg.37).
- ❖ Map titles should be accurate within the text. Steep slopes should be 25% and above (pg. 37).
- ❖ Pg. 182 of Action Agenda, under GOAL: Protect Natural Resources, change the following:
 - a) Delete “Continue to coordinate with the Health District to guide acceptable practices to septic design in non-sewer areas. (OPDS)”.
 - b) Change the wording, “Continue to monitor pollution from storm drainage systems, including sediment, through town storm water permitting. (DPW)” to “Comply with the conditions of the Town’s Storm Water Permit”. Move to Short Term goal.
 - c) Delete “Continued to support the Inland Wetland Agency in evaluating applications regarding Inland Wetland and Watercourse regulations. (OPDS)”.
 - d) Re-word “Work to align important natural resources to future development and conservation plans” (pg. 38).
- ❖ Pg. 182 of Action Agenda, under GOAL: Preserve & Strategically Expand Open Space, change the following:
 - a) Move “Continue to require open space to be deeded to the Town or other organizations part of subdivisions, or require payment-in-lieu. (PC)” to Long Term.
 - b) Re-word, “Continue to fund an open space acquisition fund annually in the capital improvement budget. (TC).
 - c) Add “Agriculture” to, “Work to promote the viability of farming, through promotion of locally grown products”.
 - d) Change the word, “relaxing” in, “Consider relaxing regulations associated with on-farm agri-tourism...”. Add the words “local food products”.
- ❖ Pg. 183 of Action Agenda, under GOAL: Preserve & Strategically Expand Open Space, change the following:

- e) Delete, “Continue to support incentivize the keeping of land in production, through reduced tax assessments”.
- f) Delete, “Consider the adoption of a Right-to-Farm law to reduce nuisance complaints associated with production agriculture”.
- g) Delete the word, “Develop”, and add the words, “Continue to establish greenbelts” in, “Develop an action plan to establish, expand, and connect greenbelts...”. Move “Implement the water trail” element of the Trails Master Plan, to, “Establish a trail system”. Short Term.
- h) Add, “Maintain or establish greenbelts between the major nodes within the Town”.
- i) Delete the words, “Continue to” in, “Continue to implement the signage plan...”.
- j) Move to Coastal Resources, “Work to acquire additional public access points to Long Island Sound. (OPDS, PRD)”. Add, “parking facilities”.
- k) Add “in” after the word “gaps” in, “Implement the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation...”. Add (PRD) at the end of the sentence.
- l) Change wording in, “Continue to offer Town support for the implementation...”.
- ❖ Under GOAL: Protect Coastal Resources. This section will be reviewed at the next meeting, after the Coastal Management Plan (MCP) has been distributed to the Planning Commission for review.
- ❖ Pg. 184 of Action Agenda, under “Protect Cultural and Historical Resources”, delete “Consider Creation and Funding a Historic Resources Fund to acquire protective easements. (TC)”. Re-word “historical value”. In the next to the last bullet, beginning with the words, “Amend zoning and subdivision”, add the letter “s” after the word “Commission”.
- ❖ The plan should be more specific about the word “significant” versus the word “critical”.
- ❖ Clearly define preservation and conservation (pg.38)
- ❖ Floodplains are hazards or development constraints, not sensitive resources. (pg.38)
- ❖ Use the correct map title for “Wetland Soils Map” on page 39.
- ❖ Move the road labels off the flood zones on the FEMA Flood Map (pg.40).
- ❖ Pg. 184 of Action Agenda, under GOAL: Protect Cultural and Historic Resource. Re-word “Fund and complete the Town Historic Survey...”. Re-word the 2nd bullet beginning with the words, “Consider establishment of National Historic Districts...”.
- ❖ Consider re-wording or deleting, “Consider establishment of National Historic Districts, as defined in the 1996 Preservation Plan...”. Consider Short Term versus long term.

- ❖ More clearly define “open space” (pg.43).
- ❖ Place xx after “State Facilities” on the Open Space Inventory Table (pg.44).
- ❖ Condense the descriptions of passive and active recreation facilities. Don’t describe everyone.

Pritchard arrived at 6:48 p.m.

Overall, the Planning Commission and Staff explained why they do not like the format of the draft document. Staff will take all the Commission’s comments and combine with Staff comments to provide the consultants with a list of changes for the text and formatting.

Tarbox left the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

- ❖ Inquiry was made about the farm act. It was noted that the text should change to agree with the recommendations.
- ❖ The Commission discussed Public Act 490 in terms of open space protection.

Staff will notify the Commission when the Municipal Coastal Program is available. This should be reviewed along with the Coastal Resources section of the POCD.

At the next regularly scheduled meeting on August 12th, discussion will begin with the Coastal Management Plan.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 7:59 p.m. was made by Sherrard, seconded by Kane, so voted unanimously.

Margil Steinfeld, Acting Secretary
Planning Commission

Prepared by Robin Silsby
Office Assistant II